



The Grand Blanc UMC "Connection"

December, 2022

December 4

2nd Sunday of Advent

COMMUNION

Sermon Series:

Nearing Christmas

"A Pregnant Anticipation"

Luke 1: 26-38



December 11

3rd Sunday of Advent

Sermon Series:

Nearing Christmas

"Mary's Magnificat"

Luke 1: 46-55



December 18

4th Sunday of Advent

Sermon Series:

Nearing Christmas

"O Magnum Mysterium"

Luke 2: 15-20



December 24

Christmas Eve

Outdoor Service @ 7pm

Candlelight Service in

Sanctuary @ 10p

"Leaving for the Possibility"

Luke 2: 1-20



December 25

Christmas

11am Service only

"A Forest and Trees Christmas"

Isaiah 9: 2-7

"A Nativity's Purpose"

I have no doubt that, by the time you're reading this, nativity scenes will be set out on front lawns, placed on fireplace mantles, and just about anywhere else Christmas decorations find themselves. In fact, even as I'm writing this article in mid-November, I've already spotted some nativity scenes while out and about (we'll leave the "it's too soon for Christmas" argument for another time). We all know what we'll find in a nativity scene: Mary, Joseph, some shepherds, an angel, 3 magi/kings/wisemen, perhaps some sheep and a camel, and of course Jesus.

Now, not to be a *bah humbug*, but it's probably worth noting that we don't find that exact nativity when we look in scripture. I know, I know...I've ruined Christmas! But, let's be honest. When we look at the Gospels, we only find the Christmas story in two of them: Matthew and Luke. Luke tells us about the birth, the angel's announcement to the shepherds in the nearby country side, and then...well, that's about it. Matthew is kind enough to include the visit of the magi, but says nothing about shepherds. So, how did we arrive at our favorite nativity scenes at Christmas time? We simply bring the two Gospels – Matthew and Luke – together and provide a few embellishments. Anything wrong with this? Not at all! Is it accurate? Well...not really.

You see, we still have the timeline to deal with. Luke's shepherds are nearby, and while we don't know how quickly they ran to the manger, we get the sense that it was pretty soon after Jesus was born. Jesus probably still had that newborn baby glow, and Mary and Joseph were still probably trying to figure out how they might ever sleep again. Coincidentally, probably not the best time for shepherds and sheep to show up, but hey! It could always be worse, right!? But, how about Matthew's magi. Speculation is that they (not necessarily three of them, by the way) probably arrived a good bit *after* Jesus birth. Herod's order to kill all children in the region 2 years old and younger (Matthew 2:16) suggests that Jesus may have been as old as a toddler by the time the magi greeted him and the holy family. Frankincense, gold and myrrh – every toddler's favorite gifts!

Now, before you're tempted to call for my retraction of this nativity heresy, or begin demanding the accuracy of every nativity scene you come across, let me offer this assurance. The accuracy and historicity of a nativity is not and has never been the main point of the Christmas decoration. I'd argue that the nativity scenes we find at Christmastime are intended to remind us of something far more important than historical accuracy and fact. *They're there to remind us that people showed up.*

People showed up to the manger, not just to see what had happened, but to prophecy God's truth, once again, to the holy family. The magi, the shepherds – even the sheep, camels and others – showed up at the manger in order to proclaim to Mary and Joseph that their child was truly the incarnation of God. Now, certainly they already knew this, right!? Gabriel told Mary as much, and Joseph had a dream during which he was similarly informed. So why the messengers? I believe that they came with such a witness to the earthly

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parents of Jesus because for the next 30 years or so, Mary and Joseph would be tasked with raising this infant child to be the Son of God. They'd teach him how to pray, how to love, how to worship, and how to care for neighbor. They'd model forgiveness for him, and remind him that he is loved. Could it be that Mary and Joseph simply needed some encouragement, and so God sent these unlikely prophets to them in order to confirm a divine truth? I suspect that's the case!

This Advent, we prepare our hearts to journey toward the manger where we *know* what we'll find! We've rehearsed this journey for generations, and so we know what will be there. Though, don't we still need prophets of some sort to announce and witness to us what we've come across? To declare to us the full divinity of the child born on Christmas? Don't we need to, not only see Jesus, but hear the reminder that he came to us as Emmanuel, *God with us*, that we might discover love, grace, and new life?

This Advent and Christmas, my prayer is that we might be that witness for one another and that we might share that same confirmation with others who need to hear it. This Advent and Christmastime, consider these questions: for whom can you be shepherd, magi, or angel? And who can be that for you?

Peace, Pastor Brian



In Our Prayers

FOR THE HOMEBOUND:

Marge Berryman
Eleanor Hall

OUR CHURCH FAMILY:

Donna Brookins
Roma Corey
Cheryl Cottrell
Judy Gratsch
Dave Griffus
Luann Griffus
Jack Hitchens
Dick Hubler
Paul Manning
Lisa McGehee
Jean Sayre
Eileen Scott
Bob Tritten

FOR OTHERS:

Hudson Bennett
Nancy Bilas
Megan Burke
Benny Burner
Deanna Cook
Patricia Crawfis
Cynthia Crawford
Fred DeYound
Shelia Dirrim
May Doran
Robert Elliott
Christopher Etheridge
Karen Ferguson
Larry Fox
Alea Gardner
Wendell Griffus
Emily Harder
Art Hubler
Dave Jones
Jay Latimer
Kathy Latimer
Ellie Lauth

Adrianna Martell
Heavenly Martin
Hunter Molyneux
Joshua Nelson
Ed Nixon
David Oden
Rick Palmer
Dave Pilon
Frank Polehanki
Linda Polehanki
Jennifer Prim
Martin Ryder
Bill Shier
Bettie Stach
Marvin Thompson
Sara Toth-Perkins
Linda Vincil
Doug West
Ed Woodard

Shirley Crane

Abbey Park
3221 East Baldwin Rd, #239
Grand Blanc, MI 48439

Jeanne Dobes

Symphony Linden
202 S. Bridge Street
Linden, MI 48451



~We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Art Hubler, who passed away over Thanksgiving weekend. Art is Dick Hubler's brother.

Hold a Light

Join us for a night when, as a community, we each hold and shine a light for someone else, illuminating the longest night of the year with love and hope!

Are you wanting to hold a light for a loved one who has died? Maybe it's for a difficult situation you're aware of? Or perhaps just as a prayer for those you love and care about.



Wednesday, December 21
7:00 p.m. @ Physician's Park
(218 Reid Rd, Grand Blanc)



~Marcia Ferguson's 10th great-grandchild, Pierce Ryan Mortimer, was born on October 21, 2022!



~Two new blessings for Jan Johnson's family! The babies were not expected until November 11, but Rhett Adam and Raiden Lee were born on October 23, 2022! Parents, Addison & Brandon are feeling very blessed.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Director of Christian Education
Angela Campbell
christian.education@grandblancumc.org
810-694-9040

Pastor's Picks!

Each month Pastor Brian will be offering his "Pastor's Picks." He will offer a book recommendation. This book could be one that he is highlighting in his sermon series, one that goes with the current church season, or one that is just a good book to read. In addition, he will be "picking" a video too. These videos can be viewed for free using Amplify Media (see the handout on the table outside the Sanctuary or contact Angela on how to use Amplify Media). Hope you enjoy. **The church will be purchasing a copy of each of Pastor's book picks for the church library. If you are interested in reading any of them, you are welcome to "check them out!"**

December 2022 picks:



Book:

"Down to Earth:

The Hopes & Fears of All the Years
Are Met in Thee Tonight"

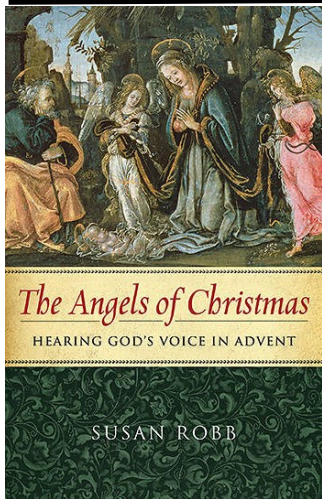
By Mike Slaughter & Rachel Billups

Video:

"Keep Watch With Me"

By Michael McRay

A 4-Part Video Series



In-Person Advent Study

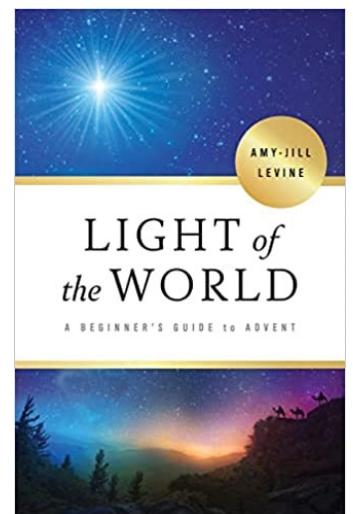
With Angela Campbell

Join Angela Campbell for a 4 week, in-person advent study on Wednesday afternoons November 30, December 7, December 14, and December 21 at 1pm in the library. During the study we will explore the four angelic visits surrounding the birth of Jesus with Zechariah, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds, and dive deep into the history of the angel Gabriel, and other angels in the Old Testament. We will use Susan Robb's Book, *The Angels of Christmas: Hearing God's Voice in Advent*. Let's explore together the messages of these angels and their meaning for listeners both then and now.

Virtual Advent Study

With Pastor Brian

Join Pastor Brian for this **Virtual Advent Study on Thursday evenings, December 1st, 8th, 15th, and 22nd beginning at 7:30pm** as together, we explore the classic Christmas stories from the Gospels, and discover how they fit into our lives, too. This class, designed for anyone who lives a busy life, but is still looking for a way to center on Jesus this Advent and Christmas season, this is for you. There are no required readings, so just join us from a cozy space at home, enjoy a beverage or treat, and come online for great conversation and even better community! To sign up for the virtual link, please email pastor@grandblancumc.org or contact the office at (810)694-9040.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Continued...



Advent Bags -

Advent Bags are still available! Every family is invited to take one bag. There is also a small gift for each child to help them during this Advent Season and are available in the Narthex. I hope everyone is as excited as I am in anticipation of these bags and our anticipation of the birth of the Christ child.



Classes for all ages at
10:00 a.m.
Every Sunday morning!

Please note there will be no Sunday School on
Christmas nor New Year's Day.



Pastor Brian's Drop-In Online Bible Study

10-11am Every Thursday

No start date or end date. Just come and join us!

A weekly Bible Study lead by Pastor Brian for everyone who has ever wanted to take a closer look at Scripture. Drop-in anytime you want!

Contact the Church office for more information and how to join the Zoom gatherings
office@grandblancumc.org or (810)694-9040



Our next New Member class will be held on
Sunday, December 11
from 12:30pm to 3pm.

Lunch will be provided. If you are interested in learning more about GBUMC and/or church membership, please speak with Pastor Brian following this worship service or feel free to contact the office any time.



Christmas Eve Worship Services:

7:00 p.m. Outdoor "drive-in" Worship Service
10:00 p.m. Indoor Candlelight Worship Service

Christmas Day Worship:

11:00 a.m. only

New Year's Day Worship:

11:00 a.m. only



Pastor @ Panera

Every Tuesday from 10am to noon.
Prayer, Chat, Advice or a listening ear.
All are welcome.
Invite your friends to stop by to meet Pastor Brian.



If you do not have access to the internet, but would like to watch Pastor Brian's Daily Devotionals, a church service or perhaps check out some of the videos available on Amplify, the television in the conference room has access to both YouTube and Amplify. Feel free to come and check out these options anytime that the church is open!



Seasoned Citizen's Thursday, December 8

Noon: Coffee & Conversation
12:25 pm: Devotion & Prayer
12:30 pm: Potluck Lunch
Program: "Christmas Caravan"
You don't want to miss this cute skit!!!



MORE

SERVING OPPORTUNITIES

USE WHATEVER GIFT YOU HAVE RECEIVED TO SERVE OTHERS

- 1 PETER 4:10 -

It is with a lot of excitement that we share our newest chance to embrace our Community.

It really is very simple. We let folks know we are serving a meal, we prepare the meal, serve it and clean up, along with meeting new people and making the evening fun and special for all. This meal might be reminiscent of the church, Food and Fellowship, of the past. It might, also, offer a chance to reach to those with food insecurities, or someone who just doesn't want to cook and we can't forget that it could offer us a chance to INVITE and WELCOME. No matter the reason, it's golden for us because we get to be the hands and feet of God and co-labor with Christ to love, serve, and heal the broken, hurting, and hopeless in our part of this world. ♥

Yes, there is a chance to help and if you are interested, please indicate on your Connect Card, the sign up sheet in the narthex or contact the church office.

All
are
welcome!

Beginning in January, 2023,
GBUMC will be hosting a

COMMUNITY DINNER

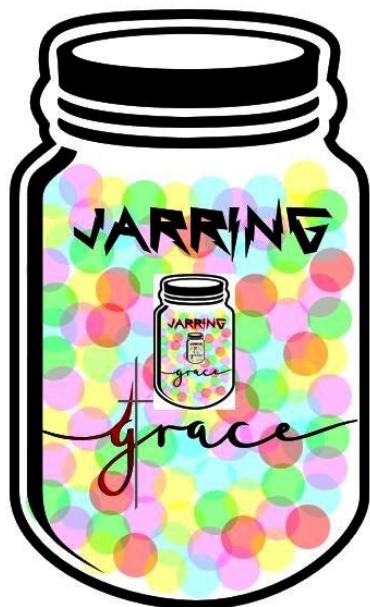
Join us on **January 4** for a
wonderful **PASTA DINNER**
Takeout available!

The **FIRST Wednesday**
of each month, 5 - 6 pm
(freewill offering will be accepted)

Grand Blanc United Methodist Church
515 Bush Ave ♥ Grand Blanc ♥ MI
810 694-9040 grandblancumc.org

*"Do all the good you can, by all the
means you can, in all the ways you can,
in all the places you can, at all the times
you can, to all the people you can, as
long as you ever can."*

John Wesley



JARRING GRACE—This wonderful **Community Engagement** is quietly happening each month by faithful, self driven volunteers who deliver candy to local businesses. A BIG THANK YOU to Tom and Carol Cerny, Gail Lutton, Bob Mills, Laurie Tritten, Marilyn Horton, Mariann Quaderer and Melinda Elmore-Hajek. Through their effort, 39 local businesses receive a visit every other month, relationships are evolving and, ask any volunteer, it takes so little time, but brings so much joy.

If you are interested in taking candy to your favorite business and thanking them and letting them know GBUMC is here and appreciate what they do, please reach out and become part of the TEAM (all supplies are provided and a brief exciting pep talk will get you started ☺).

Every United Methodist church organizes itself to plan and carry out its ministries within their community. This is one of the ways we engage and it's working. Contact Melinda Elmore-Hajek for more information.



CROSSROADS VILLAGE is located
at 6140 Bray Rd, Flint, MI 48505.

Christmas at Crossroads Village

December 3, 7 pm

Common Grace will be singing in the chapel located in the village. We hope you can grab the family and enjoy the evening at Crossroads and stop in and join us for some Holiday Fun!

Advent and "In lieu of Poinsettias" Donation

Your Advent offering (pink envelope in your giving box) will go to Liberia for the United Methodist Rural and Development Program (UMRADP). Their objective is to support agriculture infrastructure revitalization and development, increase cash and food crop production, and strengthen community outreach strategies to improve food security, job creation, and poverty reduction for sustainability and self-reliance.

We will be supporting an Appalachia project, Red Bird Clinic Community Health Center with the "In lieu of Poinsettias" mission offering. The Red Bird Clinic strives to improve the health of those living in remote mountain Appalachia where other services do not reach, or to persons that have limited or no transportation to available services by providing health programs. Their discount sliding scale fee programs ensure that medical and dental care, rehabilitation, and preventative services are accessible.

The donation for "In lieu of Poinsettias" needs to be dropped off at the office with the form below. We will not be ordering poinsettias this year but if you make a donation please designate in "memory of" or "honor of" using the form below and leave it with your check or cash in the GBUMC office, by Sunday, December 18. A list of the donations will be furnished with the bulletin at Christmas.

Please give generously in this joyful Christmas season. THANK YOU!!



Here's the information we need for your donation:

Memory of _____

(or)

Honor of _____

Given by: _____

Envelope # _____ Cash _____ (or) Check _____

Amount given \$ _____

12/04 Hedding
12/11
12/18 Martin
12/25



There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board next to the prayer room, or feel free to call or email the office to order flowers for the Sunday of your choice. Flower arrangements are \$15.00 each from Grand Blanc Florist and you may take them home following the 11:00am worship service. Your name and who the arrangement is in honor/memory of will be listed in the Sunday bulletin.

Coffee Hour

12/04 Trustees
12/11 CARE
12/18 Seasoned Citizens
12/25 No Coffee Hour

Worship With Us



Both of our worship services are available for viewing on our YouTube Channel! Now you have your choice of watching either (or both!) of our Sunday morning worship services from the comfort of your home! We continue to do our best to keep everyone safe while they participate in worship at their comfort level, whether in-person or online.

11:00am Worship Ushers

1st Sunday Jim Wise
2nd Sunday Virginia Sullivan
3rd Sunday Bob & Barb Mills
4th Sunday Gary Bendall

COUNTERS

12/04 Carol Capell, Ron Blakemore
12/11 Jessica Smith, Carol Cerny
12/18 Tom Cerny, Jim Wise
12/25 Jim Bunker, Tom Cerny



Birthday Wishes

2nd Marcia Johnson,
Amanda Norris, Eric Sandrock
3rd Amanda Bendall,
Nicholas Harper,
Donna Hedding (81),
Richard Shick
5th Judy Cottrell, Cayla Rimmell
6th Jocelyn Phillips
7th Aaron Bunker, Daniel Holtz
15th Drake Carlson
16th Joanne Lepri
18th Marianne Black, Andrew Dick,
Chloe Haggerty,
Kimberly Lutton
20th Val Wise
22nd Duane Southworth (86)
23rd Sallie Farrell (81),
Joyce Halter
24th Brian West

25th Sean Gordinier
26th Beth Bennetts
29th Alex Martin,
Denise Tretheway,
Mixsy Trinidad
30th Grace Coronado, Jerry Rule
31st Elizabeth Gilmour (84)



Anniversary Blessings

5th Donna & Ernie Brookins (47)
11th Valorie & Robert Foote
17th Mary & Paul Manning (39)
21st Dawn & RJ Magiera
23rd Mary & Shawn Rimmell
26th Carol & Tom Cerny (56)



Greeters

9:00am/Education wing
12/04 Marylee Hubel
12/11 Becky Doran
12/18 Dick Shick
11:00am/Education Wing
Jeff & Lisa McGehee
Jeff & Lisa McGehee
*Would you like to volunteer? The sign-up sheet is on the kiosk.
Or contact Tom Cerny with questions tomcerny1@aol.com*

Grand Blanc United Methodist Church
Building and Roof Mortgage Summary

MORTGAGE BALANCE (as of 10-31-22)

Mortgage Balance with UMF = \$129,685.00


Mortgage Reserve Fund Balance (as of 10-31-22) = \$9,784.00

Roof Reserve Fund Balance (as of 10-31-22) = \$17,435.00



DECEMBER 2022



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 4 COMMUNION 9a Gathering in the Spirit 10a J.A.M./Sunday Sch 10a Coffee Hour 11a Traditional Worship Noon Choir Rehearsal	5 10a Pastor @ Panera 10a Yoga 6:30p Yoga	6 10a Pastor @ Panera 10a Yoga 6:30p Yoga	7 10a Prayer Shawl 10a Prayer Group 1p Advent Study 6:30p Celebration Ringers Rehearsal	1 10a Drop-In Bible Study 6p Common Grace Rehearsal 7:30p Virtual Advent Study	2 10a Men's Coffee 7p Al Anon	3 10a O.A. FELLOWSHIP HALL IN USE: "Breakfast with Santa" FISH fundraiser 7p Common Grace @ Crossroads Village
11 9a Gathering in the Spirit 10a J.A.M./Sunday Sch 10a Coffee Hour 11a Traditional Worship Noon Choir Rehearsal 12:30p New Member Class	12 FELLOWSHIP HALL IN USE 7p Ad Council via Zoom	13 10a Pastor @ Panera FELLOWSHIP HALL IN USE	14 10a Women's Circle @ Gina's FELLOWSHIP HALL IN USE 1p Advent Study 6:30p Celebration Ring.	8 10a Drop-In Bible Study Noon: Seasoned Citizens 7p Finance Meeting 7:30p Virtual Advent Study	9 10a Men's Coffee 7p Al Anon	10 10a O.A. 10a Yoga
18 9a Gathering in the Spirit 10a J.A.M./Sunday Sch 10a Coffee Hour 11a Traditional Worship Noon Choir Rehearsal Noon Youth Lunch, crafts & caroling	19 5p-8p Culver's ASP fundraiser	20 10a Pastor @ Panera 10a Yoga 6:30p Yoga	21 10a Prayer Group 1p Advent Study	15 10a Drop-In Bible Study FELLOWSHIP HALL IN USE 6:30p Virtual Advent Study	16 10a Men's Coffee FELLOWSHIP HALL IN USE 6:30p Youth Holiday Walk @ Bicentennial 7p Al Anon	17 10a O.A. 10a Yoga
25 11a Worship No Sunday Sch.	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27 OFFICE CLOSED 10a Pastor @ Panera 10a Yoga 6:30p Yoga	28 OFFICE CLOSED 10a Prayer Group	22 10a Drop-In Bible Study 7:30p Virtual Advent Study	23 10a Men's Coffee 7p Al Anon	24 10a O.A. 10a Yoga 7p Outdoor Service 10p Indoor Candlelight Service
				29 OFFICE CLOSED NO Drop-In Bible Study	30 OFFICE CLOSED 10a Men's Coffee 7p Al Anon	31 10a O.A. 10a Yoga

2023 Opportunities for Giving Back

Your contributions to GBUMC have regional, national and international impact through our connectional giving system. In 2023 we are asking you to consider giving to the special six Sunday offerings listed below.

January 15 – Human Relations Day

Together, we extend a helping hand to those in crisis so they can overcome formidable obstacles, nurture at-risk youth, strengthen communities' self-improvement efforts and advocate for the oppressed in the United States. Your gift encourages acceptance of all of God's children.

March 19 – UMCOR Sunday

When you give to the UMCOR Sunday special offering, you support the operating activities of our worldwide relief agency, enabling it to assist churches and communities in times of disaster. The offering ensures that 100 percent of every designated gift made through UMCOR for disaster response and other critical needs goes directly to address those needs.

April 23 – Native American Ministries

Your contribution supports aspiring Native American pastors and enriches outreach in their communities. Together, we empower local, spiritual development and educate Native American seminary students to serve God faithfully, who will honor and celebrate Native American culture in their ministries and to minister to their communities with the love of Christ.

June 4 – Peace With Justice Sunday

Our Social Principles call us to love our enemies, seek justice, and serve as reconcilers of conflict. As a congregation we may lack the resources alone to effect change in a broken world, your giving is vital for the UMC to continue its global ministries of reconciliation. Because of the Peace with Justice Sunday offering, the people of The United Methodist Church are able to make a difference together by sowing seeds—and yielding fruit!—of peace.

October 1 – World Communion Sunday

Around the globe, countless gifted and qualified people face financial obstacles that hinder them from preparing for the vocation God has given them, especially youth and young adults. Your gift funds World Communion and Ethnic Scholarships and Ethnic In-Service training. Your gift provides acceptance and love.

November 26 – United Methodist Student Day

Together, we educate students so they can make a difference in the world. When you support United Methodist Student Day your gift transforms lives through education. Your contribution enriches ministry and connects students to their faith.

**Thank you for your continued support for missions in
our community, country and world!**

**Grand Blanc
United Methodist Church**
515 Bush Ave. Grand Blanc

Christmas Eve Worship Services

DECEMBER 24, 2022 | 7:00PM

OUTDOOR DRIVE-IN LIVE NATIVITY SERVICE

An outdoor drive-in service, complete with a live nativity and a beautiful hillside service. Listen, sing, and worship from your car – unless you feel like braving the cold with a blanket and chair.

DECEMBER 24, 2022 | 10:00PM

TRADITIONAL CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

A meaningful traditional service in our sanctuary with music, a message, Communion, and a candlelit singing of Silent Night.

Everyone is loved and welcome!

Please come and join us for one of our services for a night of prayer, song, worship, and togetherness as we celebrate the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Grand Blanc United Methodist Church
515 Bush Avenue
Grand Blanc, MI 48439

Church Office 810-694-9040 fax 810-694-1916
www.grandblancumc.org

Rev. Brian West, Pastor
Cathy Mitchinson, Office Administrator
Angela Campbell, Director of Christian Education
and Webmaster

Gary Brandt, 9:00 Music Director/Director of Common Grace
Andrew Cramer, Music Director for Traditional Worship
Nancy Petrie, Bell Choir Director
Adrianna White, Nursery Attendant



GRAND BLANC UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

FRIENDS IN CHRIST EXERCISING
LOVE, HOPE AND GRACE TO
ENRICH ALL LIVES



GIVING TREE

Our Giving Tree will be all online again this year. We are using Sign-up Genius.

If you would like to participate, please go to www.signupgenius.com and search for our sign-ups under the church email (office@grandblancumc.org).

If you do not want to go online, please feel free to call the office and we can sign-up for you. Thank you for your continued generosity to our neighbors through the Giving Tree. Please drop off items no later than Sunday, December 11.

Salvation Army Bell Ringing

Saturday, December 10

At the Grand Blanc
Walmart

Please consider signing up
for a one hour "shift"

11am to 7pm

The sign-up sheet is on the
kiosk outside of the Sanctuary.

~The Salvation Army is always in need of
bell ringers. If you would like to ring other
times, please speak with Tom Cerny.~



YOUTH GROUP

Holiday Walk @ Bicentennial Park
Friday, December 16
6:30p to 9:00p

Lunch, Crafts & Caroling!

Sunday, December 18
Noon to 3:00p

For Questions or additional information about Youth Group Events please contact
Jennifer Lengyel 810-241-2343 or Jessica Smith 810-287-8506

Take a break from your busy schedule and get your supper at Culver's on



Monday, December 19

Anytime between 5pm and 8pm



Your purchases will benefit our 2024 Youth Mission Trip to Appalachia!